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Security Council

Sixty-second year

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5766th meeting

Tuesday, 23 October 2007, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Osei-Adjei	(Ghana)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Chevalier
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Congo	Mr. Biabaroh-Iboro
	France	Mr. Lacroix
	Indonesia	Mr. Pratomo
	Italy	Mr. Spatafora
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Peru	Mr. Chávez
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Nasser
	Russian Federation	Mr. Rogachev
	Slovakia	Ms. Algayerová
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Pierce
	United States of America	Mr. Wolff

Agenda

Women and peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2007/567)

Letter dated 8 October 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Ghana to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2007/598)

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07-55817 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Women and peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2007/567)

Letter dated 8 October 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Ghana to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2007/598)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Egypt, El Salvador, Finland, Germany, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, Iceland, Israel, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Liechtenstein, Malawi, Mexico, Myanmar, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Spain, the Sudan, Sweden, the United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam and Zambia, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, the representatives of the aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, the Security Council has extended invitations under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations; Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women; and Ms. Joanne Sandler, Ad Interim Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Ms. Gina Torry, Coordinator of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security.

It is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2007/567, containing the report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security.

I should also like to draw attention to document S/2007/598, which contains a letter dated 8 October 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Ghana, transmitting a concept paper on the subject of this meeting; and document S/2007/607, which contains a letter dated 17 October 2007 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa, transmitting the Report on the Africa Regional Meeting on Gender Justice.

I welcome the participation of the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, at this meeting and invite him to take the floor.

The Secretary-General: I am honoured to address the Council for the first time as Secretary-General on the vital subject of women and peace and security. We have gathered to discuss the implementation of a landmark resolution. Since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), seven years ago, Member States have made significant progress. More and more, women are participating in mediating and negotiating peace, in searching for justice, in fostering reconciliation, in supporting disarmament and demobilization and in shaping development policies and rebuilding institutions.

More and more, the Security Council is ensuring that peace processes empower women and advance gender equality. More and more, United Nations entities are working closely and actively with Governments and women's organizations, including through the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

But there is so much left to do, both for the United Nations and for Member States. More countries in conflict or post-conflict situations need to establish their own national action plans. They need to take greater ownership of programmes and priorities in implementing resolution 1325 (2000). They need to identify the capacity-building and the technical and financial support needed to scale up programmes for implementation, and they need to strengthen approaches to monitoring, evaluation and accountability.

For our part, we in the United Nations system must take a more evenly coordinated approach than we have done so far. We need to work better with Governments to establish truly joint programmes driven by national priorities. We need to clarify the roles and responsibilities of United Nations entities at the country level. We need to work better as a team, so as to give countries access to a common entry point.

And we need to appoint more women in leadership positions in our peace operations around the world. I am delighted that Ambassador Ellen Margrethe Løj of Denmark has agreed to serve as my Special Representative for Liberia. She will be heading one of our biggest peacekeeping missions, and I know she will provide a shining example of the kind of qualities we need in our leaders in the field.

Violence against women has reached hideous and pandemic proportions in some societies attempting to recover from conflict. Together, all of us need to strengthen our collective and individual responses to it. That is essential if we are to reverse the damage done by conflict and to build more inclusive, accountable and cohesive societies, underpinned by viable democratic institutions.

Earlier this year, I urged the Security Council to establish a mechanism dedicated to monitoring violence against women and girls within the framework of resolution 1325 (2000). I reiterate that call today. I also encourage Member States to actively consider proposals to strengthen the Organization's gender architecture, as presented by the High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence. I believe we could significantly advance our cause by replacing several current structures with one dynamic United Nations entity. Such a new body should be able to call on all of the United Nations system's resources in the work to empower women and realize gender equality worldwide. It should mobilize forces of change at the global level and inspire enhanced results at the country level.

We all have a collective role and responsibility in accelerating the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) —the Security Council, Member States, the United Nations system, other international and regional actors and civil society. On this anniversary of its adoption, let us rededicate ourselves to that mission.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his statement. I understand that he has to proceed to the General Assembly for the meeting on financing for development.

I now give the floor to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

Mr. Guéhenno: I am very pleased to be able to brief the Council once again at this year's open debate on resolution 1325 (2000), on women, peace and security.

In 2007, we have seen a number of significant advances in the contribution of women to the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding. Some of those advances have taken place in countries in which peacekeeping operations are deployed and also represent initiatives in how the United Nations goes about peacekeeping. For instance, in Haiti's municipal election this year, 25 women were elected mayors, as compared to six in 2000. That was due, in part, to the collaboration of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti with national partners to provide coaching for female candidates. In turn, January saw the deployment, for the first time, of an all-female police contingent to a United Nations peacekeeping operation, when an Indian formed police unit took up duties with the United Nations Mission in Liberia.

The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) also continued to take steps to implement resolution 1325 (2000) in the past year. Last November, DPKO adopted a policy directive on gender equality in United Nations peacekeeping operations that obliges all uniformed and civilian staff to ensure the equal participation of women, men, girls and boys in all peacekeeping activities. DPKO and the Department of Field Support are now translating that policy into action, including through the development

of initiatives such as guidelines for political affairs officers on how to mainstream gender in their work.

Both Departments at Headquarters continue to oversee the joint DPKO-Department of Field Support action plan on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) through the interdepartmental task force on gender. Such task forces are also being replicated in the missions, with the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) having most recently re-established its gender task force in August, in order to further strengthen its gender mainstreaming across all sections of the mission.

The gender team at Headquarters has been bolstered through the recent realignment process. That included the upgrading of the post of gender adviser to the P-5 level, as a reflection of the skills and experience required to lead the team's work in backstopping and providing policy advice to the field and all divisions and offices within DPKO and the Department of Field Support.

Similarly, as I have mentioned to the Council before, we are committed to increasing the number of women serving in the field in civilian leadership positions and in operational military and police roles. The Secretariat has therefore taken concrete steps to strengthen its capacity to identify suitably qualified senior women, including through the establishment within the Department of Field Support of a small dedicated capacity focused on senior leadership appointments.

Since February, the number of women serving in senior civilian positions has increased by almost 40 per cent. As the Council is aware, last week, Ms. Margrethe Løj was appointed as Special Representative of the Secretary-General to lead the United Nations Mission in Liberia, along with Ms. Henrietta Mensah-Bonsu as Deputy for Operations and the Rule of Law. Female deputy heads of Mission were also recently appointed in the Sudan — where, Ms. Ameerah Haq was named the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Humanitarian Coordinator and Resident Coordinator — and in Burundi, where Ms. Bintou Keita was appointed as the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General. I am particularly pleased at the appointment of Commissioner Agatha Lele as Senior Police Adviser in Burundi. I should also like to draw the attention of the Council to the composition of the new standing police capacity, nearly 25 per cent of which is female.

I recognize that we still have far to go in expanding the role and contribution of women in our operations. Nonetheless, the momentum towards achieving greater balance is building. I again urge Member States to work closely with us in putting forward suitably qualified female candidates ready and willing to serve in peacekeeping operations.

Most importantly, in the context of this debate, I would like to reiterate our ongoing implementation of zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse that may have been committed by United Nations personnel. We have continued to take significant measures and have deployed additional resources to address sexual exploitation. There are currently several related policies before the General Assembly for consideration, including one on assistance to the victims of alleged abuses by United Nations personnel. In addition, earlier this year, DPKO adopted a welfare and recreation policy. It has also provided for guidance on the design and implementation of welfare and recreation measures and facilities to improve the wellness and the working and living conditions of all United Nations peacekeeping personnel.

The theme of today's debate is "Towards coherent and effective implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2005)". In the past seven years our strategy has been to focus on the implementation of the individual parts of the resolution. To that end, we have indeed made progress in the implementation of our responsibilities. I would suggest, however, that it is time to review that fragmented and disparate approach to the implementation of the resolution. We know that resolving conflict requires a multifaceted and interlinked approach. If we are therefore to empower women in that process, our efforts will also have to be integrated. Coherent and effective implementation first requires that we more fully understand the relationship between protection and empowerment in all their aspects, as set forth in the resolution, and that we understand how that affects the role and contribution of women to the maintenance of peace and security. Strategies must thereafter be developed that incorporate a range of mutually reinforcing and coordinated activities aimed at the full implementation of the resolution.

If we look, for example, at the range of interventions necessary to address rape and other forms of sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations, it becomes clear how pressing is the need for such a concerted and integrated approach.

Though DPKO is committed to combating sexual violence, we can start to truly address it in the field only with the help of the national authorities, the United Nations country team, and bilateral and non-governmental organization partners. The need for a truly United Nations-wide approach to that underscores the need for a strengthened United Nations gender architecture, as recommended by the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence.

While rape is used as a weapon of war in situations such as those in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Darfur, addressing that war crime requires going beyond political compromise and power- and resource-sharing agreements. Instead, combating rape and other forms of sexual violence calls for concerted, robust and ongoing action on the part of national actors and the international community alike at every level of engagement.

(*spoke in French*)

Sitting here today, I wish to stress that a first element of an effective strategy is the importance that the Security Council attaches to both understanding the impact of sexual violence on the maintenance of peace and security and to ensuring that the mandates and resources given to peacekeeping missions take into account the tragic situations faced by women and girls who suffer in conflicts and that they provide for the protection of civilians, including the special needs of women and girls.

The second element of an effective strategy is the political leadership of the United Nations, through the special representatives of the Secretary-General on the ground, in eliminating sexual violence. I have no doubt that, with the backing of the Council and interested Member States, special representatives can play a very important and decisive role in their advocacy, dialogue and good offices with the host countries and Governments concerned.

Thirdly, our missions can play a key role in providing preventive physical protection, for example, through their daily patrols. Such actions should be coordinated with preventive and victim's assistance programmes, including those carried out by other mission components, such as the United Nations country team, national actors and non-governmental organizations. In some locations in which we are deployed, such modest patrols can make the difference between life and death and act as a deterrent to rape, abductions and other forms of torture. At the same time, I know that we should not overstate the protection we can provide and that, even where each person protected represents a victory over the horror of sexual violence, we must be aware that the protection we offer will always be limited. When I think of our future deployment to Darfur, I am well aware that the reinforcement of troops there and the deployment of Blue Berets alone will not bring an end to sexual violence and the terrible crime of rape, given the extent of the territory to be covered, and that we will have to take action on all fronts in the fight against sexual violence and abuse. We cannot rely exclusively on military protection.

The fourth element of an effective and comprehensive strategy is the role our missions can play in facilitating and assisting national efforts to reform institutionally discriminatory structures, including rule of law institutions and the legal framework, in States where we have a presence. Such efforts appropriately reflect the impact of such structures in perpetuating sexual violence by ignoring them. In addition, those efforts underscore the fact that a coherent strategy to combat sexual violence must incorporate a thoughtful understanding of sexual violence in conflicts. If there is no such understanding of the problem, there can be no effective campaign against it. It is therefore a question of addressing the issue both in the short term and in the long term if we truly seek to resolve it.

As part of our efforts to address discrimination against women, we must clearly stress the assignment of women to senior civilian positions, as I noted, as well as to military and policing posts, so as to encourage local women in the countries where we are deployed to assume lead roles and to promote the development of a non-discriminatory system once the mission leaves. One example I would note is that the Liberian National Police received three times the usual number of female applicants in the month following the deployment of the Indian all-female police contingent to which I referred earlier.

More women in a police force must be accompanied by a strategy to improve policing as a service equally accessible to women. That in turn requires laws that incorporate women's rights and a judicial system accessible to victims of sexual violence. While it is the national Government's responsibility to ensure such accessibility, our missions have a role to play — as defined in their mandates — in monitoring remaining obstacles to women's access and in developing capacity-building programmes for human rights and judicial institutions.

(*spoke in English*)

Combating sexual violence requires a multiplicity of actors carrying out a multiplicity of actions in coordination and in coherence. I would urge that this approach be applied across the range of actions envisaged in resolution 1325 (2000). If we are to be effective in implementing that resolution, it is crucial that we share a common understanding of the factors that affect the role of women and their capacity to contribute to the maintenance of peace and security. We must also commit to identifying ways in which our different roles at the national and international levels can link together in an integrated and effective manner. Only together can we truly ensure the protection and empowerment of women in conflict.

The President: I now call on the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, Ms. Rachel Mayanja.

Ms. Mayanja: I have the honour to introduce the report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2007/567). May I begin by expressing gratitude to you, Sir, for convening this crucially important meeting on a coherent and effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Your presiding over this Council today is testimony to the deep commitment of Ghana to peace, gender equality and the empowerment of women worldwide.

The report before the Council contains the results of a second implementation review of the 2005-2007 United Nation System-wide Action Plan on resolution 1325 (2000) and an update of the Action Plan for 2008-2009.

The second implementation review conducted by my Office in consultation with United Nations entities noted new progress by the United Nations system in implementing resolution 1325 (2000), through an increased political commitment to gender equality, leadership and support by senior officials, strengthened or new policies and programmes, enhanced capacity-building on gender mainstreaming, improved advocacy and better engagement with Member States and civil society.

It also reaffirmed the findings of the first review of the implementation of the System-wide Action Plan, which was conducted in 2006 and was reported to the Council in document S/2006/770. The lack of such key elements as baseline data, performance indicators and timelines, which constitute an effective tool for measuring performance, negatively affected the monitoring, reporting and accountability processes. The updated Action Plan for 2008-2009 has been reconceptualized and transformed into a results-based programming, reporting and monitoring tool.

The proposed framework is rooted in intergovernmental mandates contained in resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent presidential statements on women and peace and security. It has three new main features: a sharpened focus through the consolidation of 12 areas into five thematic areas — prevention, participation, protection, relief and recovery, and normative — to enable the United Nations system to promote inter-agency synergies within the thematic areas; a results-based management framework, including indicators to measure progress in achieving goals under each of the aforementioned thematic areas; and expected accomplishments and baseline data.

The development of a common set of indicators provides the basis for enhanced reporting, monitoring and accountability with respect to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) by United Nations entities. The establishment of accountability procedures through the utilization of common standards is central to a coherent and efficient implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) by the United Nations. Where there is accountability, we will make progress; where there is none, we will underperform.

It is imperative for international organizations, national Governments and civil society to work together to identify priorities and to develop a practical approach to implementation strategies on women and peace and security at the national level. The challenges are many and continue to defeat the best efforts of Member States, United Nations entities and civil

society in the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Member States play a critical role in implementing resolution 1325 (2000) at the national and local levels. As national Governments shape and contribute to peacemaking, peacekeeping and rebuilding efforts and to conflict prevention, their commitment to women and peace and security enhances women's empowerment in survival and reconstruction efforts — or their inaction leaves existing structures of discrimination, poverty and violence unchanged.

In that connection, I wish to pay a special tribute to the Government of India for sending an all-women police contingent to the United Nations Mission in Liberia, as we heard this morning from Mr. Guéhenno. As role models for the women of Liberia, they have contributed in no small measure to the substantial enrolment of Liberian women in the Liberian police. National action plans and strategies provide a catalyst for ensuring that these commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment are effectively translated into domestic and foreign policies.

The United Nations system, other multilateral institutions and international partners should, in turn, be held accountable for supporting nationally owned plans and strategies and for making sure that they meet international standards and norms. Once these are in place, the support provided by the United Nations and the partners should align with national plans, priorities and approaches.

Resolution 1325 (2000) is primarily about how to make this world safe for women's and girls' equal participation in matters of peace and security. Determined action to eradicate gender-based violence will be required to enable the achievement of those goals. Impunity for perpetrators and insufficient response to the needs of survivors are morally reprehensible and unacceptable. Sexual violence in conflict, particularly rape, should be named for what it is: not a private act or the unfortunate misbehaviour of a renegade soldier, but aggression, torture, war crime and genocide.

The Security Council has done much to place the issue of sexual violence in conflict on the global policy agenda, and has strongly condemned it. However, despite the Council's repeated condemnation of all acts of gender-based violence and its demands to all parties to conflict for the immediate cessation of such acts, sexual violence remains pervasive. If the situation is not addressed now, and with urgency, thousands of women and girls will continue to die, and tens of millions more will be sexually brutalized, traumatized, tormented, stigmatized and ostracized.

I firmly believe that we are at a moment in history when the world should finally be ready to alter the course of human development and renounce all forms of violence by decisively accepting the responsibility to stamp them out. Today, the Council can help accelerate that shift by establishing a dedicated mechanism to monitor the situation of women and girls in conflict situations and hold parties to conflicts accountable for sexual and gender-based violence.

I urge all Governments, parliaments, international organizations and civil society to join the worldwide campaign on violence against women and girls to be launched by the Secretary-General later this year, to build and sustain global political commitment and action to prevent and respond to gender-based violence. Only by acting together can we create more equal relationships and more peaceful societies.

The President: I thank Ms. Mayanja for her statement.

I now give the floor to the Ad Interim Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, Ms. Joanne Sandler.

Ms. Sandler: On behalf of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), I am honoured to address the Security Council on the important issue of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security.

As the Secretary-General, Mr. Guéhenno and Ms. Mayanja have noted, it is clear that our collective commitment to moving that resolution forward requires significant strengthening. As they have also noted, there is progress on which to build. Gender advisers have been placed in most integrated missions, and gender-sensitive action plans have been formulated in security and humanitarian areas of United Nations work. Security Council members now regularly meet with women's groups and networks on their trips to conflict-affected countries. Member States are making efforts to increase the numbers of women among peacekeepers and police. The verdicts announced by

the Special Court for Sierra Leone in July showed that war crimes against women and girls could be successfully and fully prosecuted.

But the real measure of effective implementation is not the setting up of systems, plans and processes. The measure is women's participation in and contribution to more sustainable peace agreements and post-conflict reconstruction strategies. The measure is better protection of women and girls in today's conflict zones.

UNIFEM supports the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in over 30 countries, building on a vast range of partnerships with Member States, United Nations organizations, non-governmental organizations and women's networks. Allow me to present some insights from our experience.

While there are positive exceptions, women's access to peace processes has been highly uneven. In the past year, UNIFEM, in partnership with many United Nations and non-governmental organizations, has supported women's networks in Uganda, Kosovo, Nepal and the Middle East to build capacities and intensify their lobbying for inclusion in peace negotiations. In many cases, women are building dialogue across lines of conflict and have much to contribute about aspects of sustainable peace that would otherwise be neglected. But there remain too few examples of structured access for women to peace talks. Despite the promises of resolution 1325 (2000), peace tables remain the province of those who made the conflict rather than those who have the greatest motivation to end it.

In countries emerging from conflict, the numbers of women participating in elections are high — a remarkable testament to women's eagerness to participate in post-conflict decision-making, in spite of the gender-based violence that so many women encounter in daring to run for office. The numbers of women winning those contests vary according to whether electoral systems embrace special temporary measures as mandated by the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

The strongest examples of the positive impact of those measures come from Rwanda, where women won 49 per cent of Assembly seats in the 2003 election, and Burundi, where they won 30.5 per cent in the 2005 elections. Where such measures have not been adopted or have been inconsistently applied, proportions of national assembly seats won by women have been disappointing.

Perhaps our greatest collective challenge, however, is our ability to use resolution 1325 (2000) to meaningfully address sexual violence as a method of warfare. Current media reports highlight the horrific extent of sexual violence in conflicts around the world. Even so, what gets reported is only the tip of the iceberg, as the Council recently heard from the Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mr. John Holmes.

Resolution 1325 (2000) calls on us to take action against sexual violence in conflict. UNIFEM has joined with 11 other United Nations entities in setting up United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict. United Nations Action is providing strategic and technical support to United Nations integrated missions and United Nations country teams to step up their responses. It is seeking to build global awareness of the extent and impact of sexual violence in present-day conflicts and advocating for more effective responses from international and regional security institutions in conflict situations.

Vigilance and action are needed to send an irrevocable message that sexual violence must be prevented, that impunity for perpetrators is unacceptable and that providing services to survivors of such violence is the highest priority.

The days in October when the Security Council turns its full attention to the issues of women, peace and security and the presidential statements that the Security Council issues, all add up to a message of hope for women whose unique experiences of war and armed conflict has for too long been ignored.

Given the enormity of the agenda of resolution 1325 (2000) and the need to step up its implementation to contribute to greater security and protection for those who are most in need, I would end with two points that we hope the Council will give due consideration.

The first point is that the Security Council should consider calling for more holistic and concerted action by Member States and regional organizations, with United Nations system support, to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly sexual violence. That means building on the excellent points made by Mr. Guéhenno and stepping up the global

response in the following three key areas: first, the expansion of services for survivors, including provision of health services to treat HIV infection and the many forms of psychological and physical trauma that women and girls endure; second, focusing on transitional justice systems to build capacity to prosecute perpetrators; and third, above all, finding means to prevent the perpetration of sexual violence by ensuring that peacekeeping operations make life safe for women and girls.

The second point is that the Council should consider calling for more detailed reporting on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and enhance its own capacity to monitor gaps and achievements in its implementation. We reiterate the Secretary-General's call for Member States to establish a Security Council mechanism to monitor national implementation.

The issue of women, peace and security is one for which there is a huge constituency. We at UNIFEM are at the Council's disposal to assist in turning the tide of history to meet the implementation challenge. Security and peace for women remains a necessary prerequisite to security and peace for all.

The President: I now give the floor to Ms. Gina Torry, Coordinator of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security.

Ms. Torry: I would like to thank the Security Council for the invitation and the honour to be here today. I am here on behalf of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, a coalition of international civil society organizations formed in 2000 to advocate for a Security Council resolution on women, peace and security. We continue today to advocate for full and effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Unfortunately, we are not at a point where we can say that implementation has been coherent and effective. We value the opportunity to discuss that as we mark the seventh year since the adoption of that resolution.

Seven years later, we come here to ask this question: what has the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) meant for the situation of women and girls in Sierra Leone, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in Liberia, in Burundi, in Côte d'Ivoire, in Afghanistan, in Haiti, in Timor-Leste and in all other situations on the agenda of the Security Council?

Seven years later, women and girls in situations of armed conflict continue to be subjected to widespread and systematic sexual violence. This is a matter of international peace and security.

Seven years later, women remain largely excluded from the very structures that make the decisions to sustain peace or to engage in conflict. They are still marginalized in peacemaking and peacebuilding processes. This is a matter of international peace and security.

Seven years later, the integration of resolution 1325 (2000) into the work of the Security Council remains inconsistent. This means that in the situation in Darfur, women are still struggling to be part of peace talks in Tripoli. This means that in the situation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, sexual violence continues unabated and with impunity. Greater efforts must be undertaken to end impunity and to prosecute those suspected of crimes against women, particularly sexual violence — not only in the States where the crimes occurred and the States of which the suspects are nationals, but also in other States where suspects may be found.

Seven years later, there are still no monitoring or accountability mechanisms to ensure the coherent and effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). This is a matter of international peace and security.

We note the progress that has been made and that has been mentioned by other speakers here this morning. We would like to focus on the role of the Security Council in driving progress in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

It does make a difference when the Security Council integrates resolution 1325 (2000) into its work. For instance, in the June 2006 mission to the Sudan led by the United Kingdom, Council members met with women's groups and gender experts in both Khartoum and Darfur. Two months later, on 31 August 2006, the Security Council issued resolution 1706 (2006), which both invokes resolution 1325 (2000) and contains useful gender-specific language.

Resolutions need to contain such language. However, where mission mandates contain adequate language on the integration of a gender perspective or women's human rights, too often the gender mandate is not reflected in the directives, guidance, terms of

reference and incentive structures for mission staff, including the Special Representative.

Mandates also need to contain standard provisions for regular and adequate monitoring of and reporting on implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) by the field missions. Reporting is needed on concrete and specific issues that address the following questions: what is the status of women's participation in the maintenance and promotion of peace and security? What is being done to ensure that women are able to effectively participate in elections? What work is being done with national women's machineries in regard to matters of security?

As the situation stands, some field missions do have a mandate to monitor and report on, for example, grave violations of human rights, but the data and trends regarding many violations, such as sexual violence, are still lacking. Reports need to provide a picture of the security situation in regard to women, especially the violence that affects their everyday lives.

Strong accountability mechanisms are imperative to drive and to support timely and systematic implementation. Such a mechanism would help to address inconsistency in invoking resolution 1325 (2000) in the directives from the Council to the field and inadequate monitoring and reporting on implementation by field missions — particularly on violations of human rights, such as sexual violence.

The NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security respectfully urges the Council to consider how it could provide more effective monitoring and reporting on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), including through the establishment of a focal point and an expert-level working group, with appropriate leadership to ensure its active engagement with all aspects of the work of the Council.

We would like to thank members for their attention and to end with a quotation from Ms. Barbara Bangura of Sierra Leone, who spoke in an Arria-formula meeting in October 2006. She said that

> "women rely considerably on the guidance and assistance that the United Nations, in its many forms, provides. Resolution 1325 (2000) can only be successful if the Security Council is proactive in the use of resolution 1325 (2000) in its work. As such, the onus is on you here in New York to cast your light on the path we follow. Our failure is your failure; our successes, your successes."

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members, I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to not more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate their texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

I invite Her Excellency Ms. Olga Algayerová, State Secretary of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and First Deputy Foreign Minister of the Slovak Republic, to take the floor.

Ms. Algayerová (Slovakia): First of all, I would like to express my delegation's gratitude to the briefers for their presentations and to the Ghanaian presidency for organizing this important debate on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security.

Slovakia fully associates itself with the statement to be delivered later by the representative of Portugal on behalf of the European Union.

Slovakia strongly supports the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), which represents a concrete and effective tool for the promotion and protection of the rights of women in conflict and post-conflict situations. The active and equal participation of women in conflict prevention, peacebuilding and peacekeeping, including in peace and reconciliation efforts, represents the best way to eliminate gender-based violence, sexual abuse and all other forms of violence against women in conflict situations. Women's empowerment plays a critical role in peace and security processes.

In this respect, we welcome the second follow-up report of the Secretary-General (S/2007/567) on the implementation of the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan for 2005-2007, as well as the proposed further actions for the period 2008-2009. We are pleased with the reported progress in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on a truly system-wide scale. However, we are very well aware that there is still much to be done.

The mainstreaming of the gender perspective in conflict prevention, including the development of gender-sensitive early warning mechanisms, increased

participation by women in peacekeeping operations and decision-making and gender training for all staff, have been promoted by action plans and other important initiatives within United Nations entities, such as the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Food Programme (WFP).

An appropriate presence of women and gender training in armed forces, including peacekeeping forces, have a clear and positive effect on the behaviour of troops and on the actual conduct of their duty. Therefore, the provisions of resolution 1325 (2000) are fully relevant for any security sector reform plan. In this context, we welcome activities linked with the promotion of women's participation in peacekeeping, peacebuilding and the development of specific action plans for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) by the field missions of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

We also very much appreciate the work of UNICEF, which has provided gender training for 500 staff members of the international organizations based in the Sudan, and which, in cooperation with Save the Children, has provided gender training for 3,300 military observers, protection forces and civilian police officers in Darfur. I would also mention the training provided by OHCHR to military and police personnel deployed in peacekeeping operations. The activities of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe are also commendable in this area.

Gender perspective has also been mainstreamed in some humanitarian assistance programmes, as well as in the areas of post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation. In those areas, for example, the World Food Programme assisted States in gender mainstreaming in food security programmes and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda provided gender training for investigators and legal personnel, establishing gender-sensitive policies and mechanisms to coordinate the rehabilitation of witnesses.

The special needs of women and girls have been reflected in the majority of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes. In Liberia, for example, 22,370 women and 2,440 girls out of some 100,000 ex-combatants were disarmed, demobilized and reintegrated into the community. The efforts of UNICEF and non-governmental organizations led to the release of over 1,000 women and girls from armed forces in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and of over 800 girls in Sri Lanka.

Despite the tangible progress achieved in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) at the level of the United Nations system, we remain extremely concerned about the actual situation of women and girls in conflict situations, where they continue to face all possible forms of violence. I will not go into the horrible details and recall the stories of women and girls heard by the Council during the recent Arria-formula meeting organized by France. Our particular concerns are linked with rape and other forms of sexual violence on an enormous scale, which are often systematically used as a tool of war.

Slovakia strongly condemns such crimes and supports the use of all available means to put an end to the impunity of perpetrators. In that respect, we also reiterate our full support for the zero-tolerance policy with respect to crimes committed by United Nations personnel.

We believe that national authorities and the whole international community must respond more effectively to widespread sexual violence in situations of armed conflict, and that their responses need to be based on reliable information. Slovakia therefore fully supports the idea of establishing a comprehensive and effective monitoring and reporting mechanism that will help to identify the victims, patterns, real scale and perpetrators of sexual violence in the context of armed conflicts. We firmly believe that more detailed and focused monitoring could lead to more effective measures by Governments, the United Nations system, civil society and all other actors working on the ground.

The President: I invite His Excellency Mr. Pierre Chevalier, Special Envoy of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Belgium, to take the floor.

Mr. Chevalier (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): As we speak — at this very moment — thousands of

women are victims of sexual violence in its most atrocious forms. Who among us has not reacted with horror when reading the reports on the sexual violence committed against women in the Kivus in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, or in the Sudan? Therefore, some might wonder: what is the point of another debate in these hushed halls of the United Nations? We have the duty to answer that question by going beyond statements and reaffirming our political commitment to combating violence against women, using all means at our disposal. This public debate on strengthening the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, is thus particularly timely, because it is urgent to act. Therefore, I would like to warmly thank the presidency for having organized this debate.

Nearly seven years ago, the Security Council adopted its ground-breaking resolution on women and peace and security. Today, unfortunately, we must note that the issues and the challenges posed remain fully relevant. Despite the efforts of the United Nations system, described in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2007/567), and despite efforts on all our part, the resolution's objectives have not been attained.

My country is particularly concerned about the persistent scourge of gender-based acts of violence, particularly in armed conflicts. The momentum unleashed by resolution 1325 (2000) has helped to accelerate the raising of awareness about that scourge. A doctrine against this type of crime is in the process of being developed. Various United Nations forums as well as Member States have contributed to that effort. Here, I should like to recall the Brussels Call to Action to Address Sexual Violence in Conflict and Beyond.

But we need more than awareness-raising if we are to implement the provisions of resolution 1325 (2000) in that regard. Belgium calls for closer Security Council follow-up and for the development of tools to that end. Indeed, the Council should have at its disposal a horizontal report on gender-based acts of violence in the armed conflicts on its agenda. Such a report should draw on all sources available within the United Nations system and elsewhere. The experience acquired in combating the use of child soldiers has shown us the importance of this type of instrument. Such a report should also enable us to define better-targeted and far more effective actions.

Strengthening the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in its entirety is a collective duty. The Security Council can and must do more when it defines the mandates of peacekeeping missions. In general terms, it must take greater account of the situation of women in the conflict in question. In fact, depending on the case, women can be not only potential victims, but also major actors in the political or socio-economic areas, or even combatants — actors in the conflict. Women continue to be underrepresented in peace and reconstruction processes.

That preliminary analysis must be translated into better-defined mandates, in the spirit of resolution 1325 (2000). Clearer mandates will facilitate follow-up by peacekeeping missions on issues related to resolution 1325 (2000) on the ground and will facilitate reporting to the Security Council. Moreover, the need to mainstream the gender perspective in peacekeeping mandates applies not only to United Nations peacekeeping missions, but also to the peacekeeping missions of regional organizations such as the European Union and the African Union.

As you yourself, Mr. President, emphasized in your invitation to this debate, the role and the responsibility of Member States in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) cannot be overestimated. At the national level, Belgium has prepared a charter for its armed forces to promote the equality of women and men; in particular, it takes into account the provisions of resolution 1325 (2000) within the framework of operations conducted abroad. Training on the gender perspective is an integral part of preparing troops who will take part in a mission.

Furthermore, resolution 1325 (2000) now serves as a point of reference for the identification of assistance projects eligible for financial support from Belgium. The formulation of a national plan on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) is also under way.

Today's debate reminds us once again that action to meet these challenges goes beyond the Security Council's sphere of action. It is therefore important that all United Nations forums shoulder their responsibility to strengthen their implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). In that context, we welcome the debate planned in the Commission on the Status of Women at its forthcoming session, to be held in 2008.

In conclusion, the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) represents an extremely complex challenge. The Security Council must show the way forward. We believe it is urgent to strengthen its capacity to follow up on problems related to gender-based acts of violence in armed conflict. To that end, the Council must have better-targeted reporting at its disposal.

The President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Eddy Pratomo, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Director General for Legal Affairs and International Treaties of Indonesia.

Mr. Pratomo (Indonesia): Let me first express my appreciation to the delegation of Ghana for convening this debate on women and peace and security. My delegation is certain that, under the able stewardship of Foreign Minister Akwesi Osei-Adjei, the Council will arrive at a successful outcome.

We have come some distance since the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), in 2000. The plight of women in armed conflict has been publicized, and new paths of leadership have been forged by women in the political environment, in peacekeeping and in peacebuilding. However, action on behalf of women is needed to close the gap between our political pledges and the current reality of empowering women in situations of armed conflict, in order to attain peace and security.

While war is a great equalizer in terms of suffering, the plight of women in conflict situations is compounded by the physical displacement experienced in war, the environmental hazards of war and sexual crimes such as rape, which are attendant to war. In many situations of armed conflict, women are already marginalized in the political process, and the conflict situation makes that reality even more apparent.

We need to ensure that fair treatment and protection of women are incorporated into all phases of peace processes. A negotiation that satisfies the needs of the parties requires that all relevant actors be involved, irrespective of their gender. Women are habitually underrepresented and bring additional interests and roles to bear, including as victims and witnesses, which need to be integrated into any peace process. Including women may have the added benefit of expanding the palette of options for successful negotiation by increasing the number of issues at stake and the subsequent bargaining leverage. A key issue is the identification and selection of women who can participate in peace negotiations. Like their male counterparts, female participants should be linked to the greater community and should have a representative stake in the outcome.

In addition to considering the phases of conflict and ceasefire agreements, we need to consider how the interests and needs of women can be addressed in the post-conflict peace process and in the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. Political leaders need to become sensitized to existing problems by listening directly to victims and witnesses and by giving them an opportunity to share their difficulties. We should also envisage how the United Nations system might be able to engage in remediation efforts in conjunction with relevant civil society organizations.

Grass-roots efforts can be employed. In many countries and communities, there are local conflict resolution procedures and women's peace initiatives that might be utilized in order to gain a peace that is most compatible with the situation in a given country. We should seek to utilize mechanisms that have worked for the community and have worked in the past in efforts to achieve a peaceful resolution. Resolution 1325 (2000) provides a strong impetus, but it is really only a guideline for further strengthening our efforts to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. We need to consider homegrown initiatives that develop within national and regional contexts and to utilize local wisdom and capacity.

To encourage the development and dissemination of best practices, regional organizations can be involved in conducting workshops on issues relative to women in armed conflict, peace processes and peacebuilding. Moreover, we support the development of a database of good practices to further our efforts. This undertaking can be accelerated in the form of a comprehensive knowledge and information management system that can be instituted. Such a method could include a demographic database of shifting gender distribution and political involvement.

Concomitant with the role of national strategies and regional initiatives, civil society organizations can play an important role in helping to enable women in conflict environments. Their efforts have benefited women in the population and have contributed to peace. They can play an invaluable role in campaigns

to raise awareness about women's issues, including the participation of women in peacekeeping.

Women represent over half the world's population today, and their presence in political processes in many parts of the world is growing. But they are underrepresented in the phases of conflict resolution and peace and security in places where conflict persists. Men still are dominant in these processes, with the result that women are often disenfranchised.

Resolution 1325 (2000) charts a course to improving the lot of women in armed conflict situations. It is only the beginning of a journey. It should not discourage continued thinking regarding new and creative ways to empower women and raise their voices to a higher plane. Lastly, we consider it pertinent that the Council should continue to cooperate more closely with other relevant United Nations organs in this endeavour.

Mr. Rogachev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Resolution 1325 (2000) remains significant as a guideline in determining the role of women in the prevention and settlement of conflicts, in post-conflict reconstruction and in assessing the situation regarding the protection of women's rights in conflicts. It is important that the work of the Security Council for its implementation should focus on tasks relating to the Council's mandate, and not duplicate the activities of other United Nations bodies, including the General Assembly, the Peacebuilding Commission, the Human Rights Council and the Commission on the Status of Women.

An artificial connection between gender questions and the whole gamut of questions under the exclusive purview of the Security Council would lead to imbalance in terms of system-wide coherence and would impede the effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). On the other hand, the Council cannot focus on sexual violence only when it occurs during armed conflict. We must make efforts to find a balanced approach to this problem within the Security Council, bearing in mind its tasks and competence under the Charter of the United Nations. That has to do, also, with the fact that we see in this problem and other topics an attempt to promote the concept of responsibility to protect within the Security Council, an issue which under the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document is something that first requires discussion within the General Assembly.

In terms of its goals under the Charter, the focus of the Council should be primarily on the most acute and major armed conflicts, and obviously not just in Africa. We believe that the United Nations as a whole should give priority to responding to massive and systematic violence against women. That goal will be promoted by strengthening the gender component in reports of the Secretary-General to the Security Council dealing with specific situations, and that could be a new specific step in the Council's work furthering this objective.

We also should not, we believe, reduce the scope of this important resolution to the problem of sexual violence while ignoring other forms of violence against women, not even referring to other issues such as equal participation by women in peace processes, incorporating gender aspects in United Nations programmes and strategies, and so on. We believe that, as in the work on children and armed conflict, we should pay equal attention to all serious cases of violence against women and children, including murder and mutilation. Such crimes — including those resulting from acts of terrorism, indiscriminate or excessive use of force or unlawful actions by armed forces, including private defence contractors — require consistent attention from the international community.

The System-wide Action Plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) for 2005-2007 has facilitated the implementation of the United Nations strategy on women and peace and security. Its implementation has contributed to enhancing national potential, that being a key condition for protecting the rights of women and encouraging their equal participation in peacebuilding. We agree with the conclusions of the Secretary-General contained in his report (S/2007/567) on the need to overcome the shortcomings in the implementation of this plan.

At the same time, we cannot agree with the recommendations on creating specialized machinery within the Security Council to monitor the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on a national level. We believe that that would simply exacerbate the problem of duplication and lack of coherence. Experience in similar plans has shown that it would not lead to real improvements in the field. What is needed is to enhance the effectiveness of existing machinery

and not establish new bureaucratic structures, particularly at a time when the issue of the new gender architecture of the United Nations has not yet been resolved.

In this context, we are bewildered by the public statements made on the eve of this Security Council meeting by the Secretariat prejudging the Council's conclusions with respect to creating a monitoring mechanism. Generally speaking, we support the extension of the plan for 2008-2009, in order to further develop constructive coordination between the United Nations and interested States.

Mr. Wolff (United States of America): Mr. President, the United States would like to thank you and the Permanent Mission of Ghana for choosing to focus on the important topic of women and peace and security for this month's open debate. We welcome the Secretary-General's latest report and agree that important groundwork has been laid for a longer-term effort by the United Nations towards the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). However, much more needs to be done.

The important contribution women can and do make in decision-making to prevent conflict, mediate peace processes and assist in post-conflict reconstruction and rebuilding must be recognized and endorsed at a national level. Failure to bring women into these processes in a meaningful way leaves a critical resource untapped and excludes a large segment, in many cases, a majority of the population. This undermines both the credibility and the sustainability of these processes.

The United States calls on all Member States to promote gender equality and a greater role for women in the prevention of conflict, peace processes and post-conflict reconstruction.

As part of this effort to incorporate women fully into international efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts, the United States strongly supports the appointment of women to senior positions throughout the United Nations system and, in particular, a special envoy or representative of the Secretary-General. In this regard, the United States especially welcomes the recent nomination of Ambassador Løj as the Secretary-General's new Special Representative for Liberia.

The United States calls on the Secretary-General as a matter of urgency to increase the number of women considered for United Nations special representative and envoy positions and encourages Member States to redouble their efforts to nominate women candidates for these positions.

One of the key challenges we face today is reducing the tragedy of violence against women and girls in areas afflicted by armed conflict. It is often women and children who face the most horrific consequences of conflict in the world today. Sexual violence against women is reprehensible in any context, but it is especially heinous when it is used by political or military leaders as a tool to achieve political or military objectives.

It is with this in mind that the United States and others have introduced a draft resolution in the Third Committee of the General Assembly entitled "Eliminating the use of rape and other forms of sexual violence as instruments to achieve political or military objectives" (A/C.3/62/L.16). This draft resolution condemns the use by States and by non-State actors of rape, typically systematic mass rape, to achieve military or political objectives. This would be the first United Nations resolution to focus specifically on this particularly egregious form of violence against women. It calls for States to end impunity by prosecuting and punishing those who use rape as a military or political tool and to protect and support victims; and it calls for States, appropriate United Nations officers and agencies and civil society to develop and implement comprehensive strategies on prevention and prosecution of rape. We ask Member States to support and to consider sponsoring the text, which will be addressed under the Assembly's agenda item 63, on the advancement of women.

Given the special vulnerability of the civilian population during conflicts that threaten the peace and security of their nations, it is particularly abhorrent when those charged with restoring peace and stability become the perpetrators of sexual exploitation and abuse of women and children. The Council has addressed this issue in past statements, reiterating its condemnation of all acts of sexual exploitation and abuse by all categories of personnel in United Nations peacekeeping missions and urging troop-contributing countries to take appropriate preventive action, including the conduct of pre-deployment awareness training and to take disciplinary and other action to ensure full accountability in cases of misconduct involving their personnel.

The United Nations, as we heard earlier this morning from Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno, has made considerable and laudable efforts to enforce a zero-tolerance policy towards sexual exploitation and abuse by personnel assigned to United Nations peacekeeping operations and has made considerable progress in providing appropriate training, as well as improved oversight of conduct and discipline.

We underscore the need for all allegations to be investigated properly and for appropriate follow-up action to be taken.

Mr. Arias (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): May I first of all thank the delegation of Ghana for convening this meeting. I am grateful to the Secretary-General for his significant presentation and to Ms. Mayanja, Ms. Sandler, Ms. Torry and Mr. Guéhenno for their important briefings, which objectively describe the successes and challenges relating to women and peace and security and also in particular the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

The Security Council's adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) was an important milestone for this Organization. It recognizes, inter alia, the valuable contribution of women in the prevention and settlement of conflicts, as well as in peacebuilding. Nonetheless, in spite of the progress made in the implementation of this resolution, a great deal remains to be done. This is why the Security Council, the Secretary-General and other United Nations forums must continue to support Member States in adopting policies and establishing national programmes and plans that are aimed at its implementation. The Organization must do likewise within its administration. In this context, Panama wishes to welcome the appointment of Ambassador Ellen Margrethe Løj as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Liberia.

As for the Republic of Panama, while we must not disregard progress made in the implementation of all the aspects of this resolution, it is equally true that today we are confronting situations that directly affect women and girls that require our immediate attention and action. Obviously, we refer to the persistent scourge of sexual violence in situations that are on the Security Council's agenda. Consideration of the reports from the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Louise Arbour, as well as from the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, John Holmes, inter alia, oblige us to refer specifically to these situations in this debate.

The systematic rape of women and children who are simply going about their daily activities is only one segment of the challenge facing women in certain regions of the world. At the present time, the rise in the use of sexual violence against women as a tool of war has reached a truly alarming stage. In spite of its recurrence, the lack of public order and the situation of insecurity prevent State bodies from protecting women from being victims of this violence.

In the face of this problem, the Security Council and the entire Organization must reflect on more effective measures to prevent sexual violence in all cases and particularly in the aforementioned tragic situations. As part of its consideration, the Council could re-evaluate the effectiveness and the scope of the mandates of some peacekeeping operations, with a view to ensuring the presence of its components in these areas of repeated attacks. Furthermore, care of the victims must be part of the joint efforts of the Security Council and the rest of the Organization. Ensuring access to psychological, social and health support, including free and confidential HIV/AIDS screening and, where necessary, treatment, is a key part of this work. At the same time, little can be achieved without education of the people; and, therefore, States, with the needed support, must conduct awareness-raising campaigns on the subject of sexual violence.

Lastly, and as is universally agreed, justice is the main guarantor of human rights. The lack of the rule of law only results in a collapse of public order, in insecurity and in conflict. Consequently, the detention and prosecution of those guilty of using sexual violence as a tool of war is something that this body must emphasize repeatedly. In this context, we support the efforts of the International Criminal Court to prosecute those who are guilty of this crime against humanity.

The Security Council's capacity to react effectively to this challenge depends on the quality, credibility and relevance of the information it receives. More information on sexual violence with empirical data, broken down by gender, must form part of the reports considered by this Security Council. This will help us understand how and why this phenomenon exists. It will also help define more effective strategies to combat it. This is why the Republic of Panama

hopes and trusts that, as of now, the Secretariat will include in its reports to the Council more details relating to this grave violation of the rights of women.

In conclusion, may I reiterate my own country's well-known position that in order to put an end to the cycle of violence against women, which exists both in peacetime and in wartime, it is necessary to promote, inter alia, women's active participation in all aspects of political, socio-economic and cultural life. This must be the ongoing commitment of our countries and of the United Nations system.

Ms. Pierce (United Kingdom): May I join others in thanking you in particular, Mr. President, for honouring us with your presence today and for choosing such an important theme for this debate. We are also pleased to be honoured by the presence of so many other ministers.

We would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2007/567) and for appearing here today. We also very much welcome what the Under-Secretary-General said about the work of the Secretariat on this important matter. We would like to extend our congratulations to them for what they have achieved.

It was also very good to be able to hear from the Special Adviser, the acting Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the Coordinator of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security. We welcome them to the Council and congratulate them and their teams for the important strides they have made on these issues.

This is not a new issue, as anyone who is familiar with the Greek play *Lysistrata* — which means "she who disbands armies". The role of women in peace and security is a very old and distinguished one. It behoves us today to see how we can build on that.

The United Kingdom is committed to the key resolution 1325 (2000). We continue to promote its implementation at the United Nations and in the international community. As many speakers have noted, there has been progress in the seven years since its adoption, but much more remains to be done.

Women and children suffer disproportionately in armed conflict. They constitute the majority of all victims. The Security Council has a key role to play in providing for the protection of women from gender-based violence, including torture, rape, forced pregnancy, sexual slavery, prostitution and trafficking, which are all committed during conflict and continue in post-conflict situations. Conflict is the business of the Council.

The evidence from countries on the Council's agenda today shows how much remains to be done. There is continued sexual violence on a massive scale in the conflict-affected areas of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. UNICEF recently stated that 18,000 cases of rape were reported in three provinces alone. The cruelty of the sexual violence inflicted upon women and children, in particular as a weapon of war, is unspeakable. This is not a debate about the institutional niceties of whether the subject does or does not belong on the Council's agenda. This is a debate about protecting people who are suffering as a result of conflict.

The situation in Darfur continues to be characterized by gross and systematic violations of human rights and by breaches of international humanitarian law. That too is a matter for the Council.

In Burma, Mr. Pinheiro, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on human rights, has reported on the systematic sexual violence used by the military, police and border guards as part of the Government's anti-insurgency tactics.

The Council has a duty to listen to, but also to act upon, such reports. We welcomed the Arria Formula meeting hosted by the Mission of France earlier this month. It is imperative that the Security Council hears the often unpalatable testimonies of witnesses on the ground. We heard about public rape in front of families and communities, forced rape and incest between victims, the introduction of objects into victims' cavities, the pouring of melted rubber into women's vaginas, the shooting of women in the vagina and inducing abortion using sharp objects.

That sort of cruelty is something that concerns us all. Events such as the ones described in that Arria Formula meeting — on the situation of women in Darfur, Chad and the Democratic Republic of the Congo — and the report of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to the Security Council in September regarding conditions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are an important part of the debate.

Much of what resolution 1325 (2000) deals with takes place at levels where Security Council resolutions are often not heard. But we do need to hear about such acts. Resolution 1325 (2000) must be used as recognized doctrine to inform the Council's deliberations; in turn, it must have impact on the ground. That can only be achieved by fully implementing it. The provisions of resolution 1325 (2000) and successive presidential statements thereto need to be translated more consistently from words into actions.

We support Minister Chevalier's call for resolutions mandating that peacekeeping missions ensure that that happens. We also welcome what Minister Pratomo said about the role of regional organizations and civil society. In addition, we welcome the updated United Nations system-wide Action Plan for 2008-2009, which we hope will promote greater coherence and awareness within the United Nations system while also promoting gender mainstreaming within peace-support operations. In that context, I would like to join other speakers in congratulating the Secretary-General on appointing Ellen Margrethe Løj his Special Representative for Liberia. She is an outstanding choice.

To encourage national implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), Member States should be able to look to the United Nations for guidance and assistance in the production and ownership of national action plans. The Peacebuilding Commission can also contribute crucially by its development of peacebuilding strategies.

Violence against women is a crime in itself. It is an obstacle to long-term peace and security. Evidence shows that peace and security reconciliation processes are only sustainable when all actors in society are involved. We heard today of the need for the female voice to be heard at the Tripoli conference on Darfur, as part of a process of bringing in non-State actors. We would support that.

We also believe that, although the United Nations Secretariat has done some welcome work, there is more that can be done to enlist different parts of the Secretariat — for instance, UNIFEM and the United Nations System-wide Action Plan — so that they too can contribute to the reports that are presented to the Council and this issue can be given the weight it deserves.

The issue of sexual and gender-based violence against women is as much about perpetrators and tackling impunity as it is about victims. Those accused of such violations should be named, shamed and brought to fair trials. The Security Council will only limit its ability to ensure long-term peace and security in many of the countries on its agenda if it does not address gender-based violence.

I would like to turn to the draft presidential statement before the Council. The United Kingdom would like to thank your Mission, Mr. President, for its outstanding work in seeking to promote the agenda of resolution 1325 (2000), not only through today's debate but also through the draft statement that it has prepared. We and other delegations had hoped that the final draft could have addressed the current and growing concern in the apparent proliferation of sexual and gender-based violence within States that are currently on the agenda of the Security Council.

We are disappointed that consensus could not be reached on the proposal to request the Secretary-General to prepare a report within the next six months that focused on sexual violence in current countries in conflict. I think that is all the more disappointing given that the Secretary-General himself and the Special Adviser and other speakers have said that they would support such a report. Quite frankly, we find it astonishing that anyone could object to that on narrow institutional grounds. We believe that the debate has shown very clearly why that is the business of the Council. But we also support what Mr. Chevalier and Mr. Pratomo have said, namely, that this is not the exclusive business of the Council. There are other parts of the United Nations system that can, and should, deal with this issue. We look to those who do oppose additional reporting through the Security Council to lead and produce initiatives in other United Nations bodies, which we would be happy to support.

We also hope, however, that it will be possible to return to this issue within the context of the Security Council when we have the report on the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). A long-term solution to gender-based violence depends upon the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), with true gender mainstreaming and gender equality. We are committed to working together towards that goal, and to do justice to this landmark resolution.

Mr. Liu Zhenmin (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's open debate and for presiding over it in person in New York. I also wish to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2007/567). I welcome his presence and statement at this meeting. I also wish to express my gratitude to Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno, Ms. Rachel Mayanja and Ms. Joanne Sandler for their statements.

This year marks the seventh anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). A milestone in the field of women, peace and security, that resolution has laid the foundation for cooperation by all parties concerned in this field. The Security Council has taken a lot of follow-up action to the resolution and the Member States concerned have also actively taken relevant measures pursuant to the resolution. Since the Secretary-General formulated the United Nations System-wide Action Plan in 2005, positive results have been achieved in the implementation of various aspects of the resolution over the past two years.

However, we need to take an objective view of the successes that have been achieved and the shortcomings that still exist. As stated by the Secretary-General in his report, various degrees of progress have been registered in such fields as conflict prevention and early warning, peacemaking and peacebuilding, peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance, post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation, the implementation of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, and the prevention of and response to sexual violence.

On the other hand, capacity-building at all levels still leaves much to be desired, the problem of inadequate funding remains prominent, and there is a lack of close coordination between international cooperation and national activities. Those challenges have compromised the effectiveness of the comprehensive implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The Security Council should further enhance the implementation of the resolution and advance comprehensive progress in all aspects of the issue of women, peace and security. In order to achieve that goal, all parties concerned should put special emphasis on the following tasks.

First, the Security Council can play a unique role in the field of women, peace and security, and various organs of the United Nations system should strengthen mutual coordination and cooperation, while working under their respective mandates. It is the broad common understanding of the international community that it is necessary to protect and empower women, safeguard their rights and interests, and achieve gender equality. That is an important undertaking which requires integrated action. The United Nations has adopted quite a number of instruments in this field. As the organ with the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, the Security Council should work effectively within its terms of competence, focusing on conflict prevention, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction. The General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Human Rights Council and the Peacebuilding Commission have their respective mandates and roles in advancing women's rights and interests, and the work of the Security Council should not duplicate or seek to replace that of those organs.

Secondly, it is necessary to enhance the participation of women in all stages of a peace process and to acknowledge their status and role so as to lay a firm foundation for peacebuilding and the realization of lasting peace. Respect for and protection of women are manifestations of social civilization and progress, and necessary elements of a mature social system. Respect for and protection of women should be incorporated into a peace process from the beginning to the end. The special needs and concerns of women should be accommodated and their potentials and roles tapped. They should enjoy greater participation and decision-making power with institutional guarantees. In recent years, the Secretariat has taken many positive measures to increase the ratio of female senior officials and female heads and staff of peacekeeping missions. We hope to see such efforts continue.

Thirdly, countries concerned should be encouraged to formulate, on the basis of their specific circumstances, national plans of action or strategies to implement resolution 1325 (2000), with vigorous support from the United Nations and the international community. Resolution 1325 (2000) cannot be comprehensively implemented without national action. However, the countries that need to take implementation actions the most, especially those involved in or recently emerged from armed conflict, often lack implementing capabilities and are burdened by specific special situations and difficulties. The international community and donors should come

forward with generous help and the United Nations should provide various kinds of assistance to give the Government and people of countries concerned full ownership and strengthen their capacity-building, and avoid acting in their place or imposing anything on them.

The Outcome Document of the World Summit emphasized that the progress of women is the progress of all humankind. That is equally true in the field of peace and security. The comprehensive implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) represents an important guarantee for the realization of that goal. We support the Secretary-General in his ongoing efforts to implement the United Nations System-wide Action Plan. The Chinese Government has always attached importance to the protection of women's rights and interests and the empowerment of women.

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset to thank you, Sir, for your presence at this important meeting and to extend to the permanent mission of Ghana to the United Nations my sincere thanks for its thorough preparations for this open debate.

I would also like to extend my thanks to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations; Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women; Ms. Joanne Sandler, Ad Interim Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women; and Ms. Gina Torry, Coordinator of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, for their briefings today.

The State of Qatar firmly believes that women are key partners in all efforts towards and stages in the maintenance and strengthening of international peace and security. It also believes in the priority of the ongoing work to integrate women into all peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations and in the development of national policies for the consolidation of peace in areas of armed conflict. The State of Qatar strongly condemns all sexual and physical abuse of women and girls in areas of armed conflict. The State of Qatar stresses the need to provide them with comprehensive protection and to take firm action against those who sexually abuse women and girls in areas of armed conflict, be they parties to the conflict or United Nations peacekeeping operations personnel, in order to put an end to impunity.

We have reviewed the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) for the years 2005-2007. In that regard, we commend the efforts and activities carried out by all the entities of the United Nations, which have made significant progress in many areas of the Plan. It is reassuring to note that the review process indicates an increase in the political commitment to gender equality, the empowerment of women in peace processes, and the strengthening of capacity-building, especially in the area of women's full participation in all stages of peace processes, including in negotiating and implementing peace agreements and in the development of new mechanisms for monitoring and reporting on the status of women and their contributions to peace processes.

With regard to addressing all forms of violence against women and children in armed conflict, including sexual violence, and to addressing the issue of impunity from prosecution for such crimes, we commend the efforts of United Nations entities in carrying out the United Nations zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse committed by their personnel; in providing support to Member States in their efforts to align their national legal systems with the relevant international standards; and in cooperating in the area of national capacity-building in the fight against those crimes and against impunity. We also commend the Governments concerned for their cooperation, which is essential for the success of any plan intended to put an end to this phenomenon.

Despite the progress that has been made, many institutional and organizational challenges must still be addressed to achieve universal implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The Governments of post-conflict countries and countries affected by conflict bear the primary responsibility for the implementation of that resolution. While such countries have established national mechanisms for the advancement of women, they need financial and technical support to ensure active participation by women in the formulation of policies and programmes relating to the establishment and consolidation of peace and security. In that respect, the Secretary-General has pointed out in his report the inadequate funding of gender-related projects in peace processes and post-conflict peacebuilding.

Overcoming these challenges does not require the creation of new mechanisms and bodies or the submission of new reports. That would entail a waste of money and effort that could be better spent to improve and strengthen existing mechanisms. With regard to monitoring and follow-up, the Secretary-General should include in his periodic reports to the Security Council on various of armed conflicts an assessment of progress made in mainstreaming the gender perspective in all peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions and data on all forms of violence against women and children, including killing and maiming and sexual violence committed by the parties to the conflict and by peacekeeping personnel. Those reports must also include best practices and lessons learned in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Turning to national implementation, the successful implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) requires enhancing the capacity of the United Nations peace support, humanitarian and post-conflict reconstruction operations to backstop the efforts of Member States in strengthening their national capacities, in line with national objectives and the relevant international standards, to achieve gender equality, the empowerment of women in the area of peace and security, success in the fight against all forms of violence, especially violence against women and children, and the eradication of the culture of impunity. Success also requires paying special attention to countries emerging from conflict, which need financial and technical support in the preparation of national plans of action to implement resolution 1325 (2000). We commend the effort to take that objective into account in the formulation of the United Nations System-wide Plan of Action for implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) for the period 2008-2009. We also stress the importance of continued financial and technical support, the lack of which could make the objective of achieving the global implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) elusive. We will support the draft presidential statement that is before the Security Council, which enjoys consensus.

Mr. Lacroix (France) (*spoke in French*): I should like to start by thanking you, Mr. President, for taking the initiative to hold this public debate on women and peace and security. The French delegation appreciates your presence here with us.

I would like at the outset to recall that France fully aligns itself with the statement that will be made shortly by the Portuguese Presidency of the European Union.

The adoption, seven years ago, of resolution 1325 (2000) was recognition that the participation of women on an equal footing with men in society and in decision-making processes and the protection of women from violence and violations of their rights have an important impact on conflict prevention, on the course of conflicts and on post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction. It is thus not only legitimate but essential for the Security Council, in the context of its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and complementing the actions pursued by other United Nations organs, to continue to concern itself with the situation of women in conflict and post-conflict situations.

A great deal has been done in seven years, especially in the United Nations system, to implement resolution 1325 (2000). The Security Council has integrated — not systematically enough, it must be recognized — the approach advocated in resolution 1325 (2000) in the mandates of peacekeeping operations and has tried to convince the parties themselves to integrate this perspective in peace processes. The Secretariat and the agencies, funds and programmes, each in its own area, have increased their activities to better protect women, ensure that their specific needs are taken into account in transition phases and involve them more in decision-making processes.

My delegation would like, in that connection, to warmly thank the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, Ms. Rachel Mayanja, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, and Ms. Joanne Sandler of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) for their respective contributions to the implementation of the resolution and for their statements in today's debate.

The report that the Secretary-General has submitted on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) (S/2007/567) reflects the profusion of initiatives to train personnel for peacekeeping operations, to rethink the organization of refugee camps in order to take into account women's specific needs, to support

women who are victims of violence and to fight impunity.

Among those initiatives, I would like to draw attention to the one carried out by UNICEF and sponsored by France, which led to the adoption in February 2007 of the Paris Guidelines on the protection and reintegration of children associated with armed forces or armed groups. One of the fundamental underpinnings of the guidelines is to give more consideration to the specific needs of girls, including in all processes involving the demobilization and reintegration into the community of children who have been associated, in one way or another, with an armed group.

Should we thus consider that seven years of implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) have met the expectations it raised? The answer is no.

When Mrs. Rama Yade, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Human Rights of the French Republic, came to New York on 1 October to chair, together with Mrs. Mary Robinson, an Arria-formula Security Council meeting on the question of women in conflicts in Africa, it was to awaken the consciences of Security Council members to that subject. The powerful testimony at the meeting on the extent of the suffering of women and girls, in camps for displaced persons in Darfur and in regions of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where certain groups engage in systematic sexual violence accompanied by acts of barbarism that defy reason, reminded us that on the ground the real situation for women has changed far too little since 2000.

The Security Council and all the actors involved in the implementation of the resolution must therefore ask themselves a number of questions. How can we claim that resolution 1325 (2000) is being implemented when 27,000 cases of sexual violence were recorded in 2006 in South Kivu province alone? Again, those are just the reported incidents. We can assume that the reality was far worse. How could such a situation develop? What new means can be used to put an end to that situation — and all situations in which women are victims of systematic violence? How do we explain the fact that in spite of specific references in certain Council resolutions and statements, many peace processes still take place without the involvement of women and without taking into account their concerns and contributions?

In order to allow the Council to respond to those among other questions and to develop new approaches to ensure a more effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), especially with regard to protection, France had been in favour of the speedy preparation of a report of the Secretary-General on this specific issue. We regret that such a basic proposal was not supported by all Security Council members. We hope nevertheless that the mechanism put in place to ensure that the Council has more detailed information on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) with respect to all the situations on its agenda, and that it can engage in dialogue on this subject with the special representatives of the Secretary-General. We hope that that mechanism will make it possible for those questions to be addressed more effectively and will lead to concrete improvements in the situation on the ground.

Before concluding, I wish to refer to a few areas on which my delegation believes we need to focus our efforts in post-conflict phases. The first is the protection of women and the rehabilitation of victims, especially victims of sexual violence. How can lasting peace be restored when women who have already been victims of violence in the conflict phase are then ostracized within their communities? It is important, inter alia, that disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes take fully into account the fate of women who have been associated, most frequently by force, with groups of combatants.

The second relates to the administration of justice. How can women speak out and take part in civic life if they have to remain in contact with their former tormentors and to live in fear? How can we ask them to seek justice if that is synonymous with further humiliation, denial and, potentially, reprisal? The fight against impunity and the adoption of a gender-specific approach by the judicial system are indispensable.

The third area is the participation of women in decision-making processes. Access by women to elective office is an important element; one can only welcome in that regard the examples of Rwanda, Burundi and Liberia. But we must also ensure that women, especially through their organizations, are involved in all administrative processes.

Fourthly and finally, the establishment of institutions committed to parity is necessary. The phase of building institutions offers a unique opportunity for

countries emerging from conflict to establish institutions in accordance with the most advanced legal standards. Instruments such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women must be a point of reference for all actors involved in reconstruction.

In conclusion, I wish only to say that we consider the ongoing participation of civil society to be extremely important in our collective efforts on this subject. In that connection, my delegation listened with great attention to the speech by Ms. Gina Torry, Coordinator of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security. My delegation thanks her for her contribution, which will continue to spur and inspire our actions in the Security Council towards the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Mr. Biabaroh-Iboro (Congo) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, I wish to begin by expressing to you the regrets of your brother and fellow Foreign Minister, His Excellency Mr. Basile Ikouebe, who, because of his schedule was unable to travel to New York. My delegation also wishes to express its pleasure in seeing you presiding over this annual debate of the Security Council to review — now, seven years after its adoption — the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security.

This year's report of the Secretary-General (S/2007/567) provides useful information on progress made since the first follow-up on the United Nations System-wide Action Plan for the implementation of that historic resolution. It will be recalled that the first report (S/2006/770) made it possible to see what progress had been made and what shortcomings needed to be corrected, thus allowing for the updating of the System-wide Action Plan for 2008-2009. In that connection, my delegation wishes to thank all of those involved in that difficult task, including the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, experts from throughout the system, United Nations bodies and civil society organizations. The quality of their work deserves our appreciation.

In the light of the report of the Secretary-General, my delegation has a number of observations to make. Numerous obstacles impede the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), in particular serious cases of discrimination and sexual violence against women and girls. They are the ones who pay a particularly high price in conflict situations. The frequency of acts of violence against women in conflict and post-conflict situations is increasingly widely recognized and documented. Everybody today agrees that such violence must be condemned, along with the climate of impunity in which such acts continue to be perpetrated, as those are the main obstacles to peacebuilding.

My Government understands the need to eliminate all obstacles to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), and we remain convinced that success more than ever requires close cooperation between Member States and the United Nations system. Only then can our objectives be achieved. For its part, Congo is working to mainstream the gender perspective in many sectors of public life and to involve women in all stages of the peacebuilding process, in particular the negotiation and implementation of peace agreements, on the basis of the Beijing Platform for Action and resolution 1325 (2000).

At the regional level, Congolese women are involved in the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region and are actively participating in the work of the thematic groups and in meetings of the preparatory committees. In that framework, they participated in the meeting of women from the Great Lakes region on peace and security held last year in Kinshasa.

With respect to the role played by women in building the life of the nation and in the light of the recommendations of the first report of the Peacebuilding Commission (S/2007/458), my Government supports any mechanism designed to ensure the full participation of women in the post-conflict phase. Along the same lines, the Congo is in favour of improving the representation of women in peacekeeping operations and appreciates the successful efforts of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in that area.

We believe, however, that additional efforts need to be made at all levels in order to appoint women officials to high-ranking posts within the United Nations system, including as special representatives or envoys of the Secretary-General. In that connection, we welcome the appointment of Ms. Ellen Margrethe Løj as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Liberia. Her ability and her dynamism have already

convinced us that she will be equal to the task conferred on her by the Secretary-General.

Moreover, the Congo is convinced that it is necessary to establish a subsidiary body on women and peace and security whose mandate would be, inter alia, to ensure the effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Indeed, such a mechanism would help not only to strengthen the actions of the Security Council by speeding up the implementation of that resolution but would also help to perpetuate the positive changes in the situation and the role of women, in particular in the case of countries in a conflict or post-conflict situation, as well as enhancing coherence in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) at various levels. However, as we focus our attention on all forms of violence against women and young girls in countries on the agenda of the Security Council, the fact nonetheless remains that the seriousness of these acts in most countries in conflict cannot fail to awaken our collective conscience.

My delegation is ready to support any action designed to speed up the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). In that regard, we fully support the draft presidential statement prepared by the delegation of Ghana, which we warmly thank for this important initiative and which we congratulate once again on the outstanding manner in which it has presided over the Council.

In conclusion, my delegation hopes to see this debate contribute to enhancing the now recognized role of women in the maintenance of peace and security, and in peacebuilding.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): Mr. President, your presence in New York with us today is a clear indication of how seriously Ghana takes this matter. We commend the Ghanaian delegation for organizing the annual open debate on women and peace and security. We are also grateful for the contributions made to the debate by Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno on behalf of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, Ms. Joanne Sandler, Ad Interim Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, and Ms. Gina Torry, Coordinator of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement that will be read out by the delegation of Zambia on behalf of the Southern African Development Community.

It has been seven years since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). While there has been progress in implementing that resolution, there is still a lot to be done to improve the lives of women, particularly women in conflict-affected areas. For this reason we agree with the concept paper, presented to us by the Ghanaian delegation (S/2007/598, annex), that one of the central objectives remains to meet the demand for gender mainstreaming in all its aspects.

Throughout the history of South Africa, women have played a pivotal role in the liberation of our country. In the negotiations for a new South Africa, women were in the forefront in developing a constitutional framework centred on a non-sexist and non-racist policy. From the beginning, South Africans recognized the need for mainstreaming a gender perspective in all aspects of our lives. As a result, we pride ourselves on having senior women in key government, business and civil society positions. As South Africa has increased its participation in the international arena, our representatives in regional and international peacebuilding and peacekeeping efforts have always included women.

Also from our experience, we have learned that it is important to build solidarity among all actors, particularly women. For example, South African Women in Dialogue (SAWID) has links with women throughout the world. SAWID has collaborated with women from the Great Lakes region, including women from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Recently, SAWID travelled to Darfur in solidarity with the displaced women of the Sudan.

Despite those efforts, South Africa believes that there is still more work to be done in support of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict societies. Women and girls make up a disproportionate and overwhelming number of the victims of violence, particularly gender-based violence. Mothers and girls are the first to be affected in war situations and suffer among the highest casualties. Those who survive conflict are victimized and traumatized yet again just because they are women.

While the situation of women, particularly in conflict areas, remains desperate and unacceptable, we should resist seeing women only as victims. While

women may be the first casualties of conflict, it is also true that women have played and continue to play a meaningful role in the recovery of families and their reintegration into society. Women have also been among leading policymakers and have been instrumental in bringing about democracy in some post-conflict societies. As we approach the seventh anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), my country, South Africa, would like to pay tribute to those women. One of Africa's leaders is President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia, who was one of the major contributors to resolution 1325 (2000), which we are discussing today.

We also agree that Member States must continually look at measures to strengthen the full and effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). We believe that full implementation requires the resolve of Member States in forming partnerships with civil society, the private sector and community-based organizations to promote women's rights.

During the negotiations for the drafting of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), South Africa was among the advocates of ensuring that gender-based violence was included in the list of war crimes. When the International Criminal Court was created, South Africa presented a woman candidate, who has since contributed meaningfully to the ICC's jurisprudence on violence against women in armed conflict. Judge Navi Pillay, a member of the ICC, is a well-known advocate for the protection of women's rights.

Also, South Africa has joined with Sweden and others in promoting the Partners for Gender Justice initiative. The aim of that initiative is to forge a more coordinated and integrated system of collaboration to assist national stakeholders in achieving gender justice in conflict affected countries.

We recently hosted in Cape Town the Africa Regional Meeting on Gender Justice, with the participation of ministers of justice and ministers of gender, at which there was a sharing of experiences on how best to identify gaps, challenges and opportunities with regard to implementing resolution 1325 (2000) at the national level. The Regional Meeting also focused on ways to promote gender justice and ensure the participation of women in the legal system. We wish to thank the President of the Council, the Permanent Representative of Ghana, for circulating the report of the Africa Regional Meeting on Gender Justice as a document of the Security Council (S/2007/607).

In conclusion, South Africa believes that there is still more work that needs to be done to address the situation of women and peace and security. There is a need for increased participation by women at all levels, particularly in peacekeeping and peacebuilding, as well as in United Nations field operations. More women should be appointed as special representatives and envoys of the Secretary-General. For that reason, we commend the Secretary-General for appointing our colleague Ambassador Ellen Løj of Denmark as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Liberia.

South Africa remains committed to working within a consultative and collaborative framework to find peaceful resolutions to conflicts. To that end, we believe it would be important for women in local communities to be allowed to participate in finding solutions for the reconstruction and rebuilding of their own countries. Besides being the ones who are the first to suffer when there is conflict, women are often the ones who know when and how to rebuild the lives of their families and communities.

Mr. Chávez (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): Peru welcomes the initiative of the Ghanaian presidency to hold an open debate on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and on the role of women in peacebuilding. We also wish to thank the Secretary-General for presenting his report. In addition, we appreciate the statements made by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the Ad Interim Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the Coordinator of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security.

The report of the Secretary-General (S/2007/567) is revealing, because it indicates that women and girls continue to be the principal victims of acts of violence in armed conflicts. Peru wishes to associate itself with the rejection of all acts of violence and to express its concern at the information that rape and sexual abuse, primarily against women and girls, are increasingly being used intentionally as tools of war by parties to armed conflict. That is why the international community must continue to use all instruments available to put an end to violations of the human

rights of women and girls living in situations of armed conflict. This battle must be fought at the national and international levels, with programmes and policies that promote the prevention of violence through the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in all its aspects.

In that regard, we also want to highlight the role of the International Criminal Court in the fight against impunity, as well as the need for States to make it a priority to shoulder their responsibility to do justice and punish those responsible for crimes, as part of a comprehensive approach to peace, justice, truth and national reconciliation.

Peru notes with satisfaction the Secretary-General's report and the initiatives and actions undertaken by United Nations entities to implement resolution 1325 (2000). We agree with the Secretary-General that, if we are to promote the implementation of the resolution, we must improve and rework measures adopted by the United Nations and by States that find themselves in conflict situations or reconstruction processes. We appreciate the rethinking of the concept of the 2008-2009 Action Plan to make it a results-based instrument for planning, following up on and presenting results-based reports.

We share the view that the Action Plan's central objective must be to develop the capacity of United Nations operations to support peace as well as post-conflict and reconstruction efforts so that they can assist States in their efforts to strengthen national capacity to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women in the areas of peace and security. In that connection, we support the Secretary-General's proposal that a system-wide evaluation of the progress achieved in the coordinated implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) be conducted in 2010, followed by the submission of a report to the Security Council.

Peru supports the initiative to hold Security Council consultations on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and its application on the ground. Such consultations would enable States to obtain detailed information about progress, good practices and difficulties related to the implementation of the resolution. Furthermore, we believe it is important that the Secretary-General report on progress made in mainstreaming the gender perspective in peacekeeping operations and that disaggregated information be provided on types of violence — including sexual and gender-based violence — committed by parties to armed conflict. We are already aware of tragic cases that have occurred in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Darfur, among other places.

Finally, we believe it is important that the international community support the national implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) as well as the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan, particularly by providing sufficient financial resources in a timely and sustainable manner.

The work still lies ahead and must be tackled jointly by States, the United Nations system and civil society in order to strengthen follow-up and accountability regarding the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Mr. Spatafora (Italy): The presence of Minister Osei-Adjei among us is an honour; it shows the significance that the Ghanaian presidency attaches to an issue of crucial importance, for reasons that we all know.

I should like, first of all, to thank the Secretary-General for his very focused statement. I also wish to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his briefing. It would be very useful if we could have copies of his talking points, because he discussed several points that I have to build upon. I thank Special Adviser Mayanja for the passion that she expressed in her briefing, which I shall also revisit. I thank Ms. Sandler, Ad Interim Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), for her briefing. Italy is a true believer in and a strong supporter of UNIFEM, which is a shining example in the galaxy of funds within the United Nations system. If UNIFEM were not there, we would have to create it. Finally, I thank Ms. Torry, Coordinator of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, for her briefing, which was very passionate. I will also come back to that in a presentation that is cool, but all the more compelling because of its coolness.

In view of the constraints on our time, I shall touch on just a few points, dispensing with my talking points.

One of the points made by Mr. Guéhenno was the way in which we enhance and have clearly in mind the relationship between protection and empowerment.

That is a double track, and we must make progress on both tracks. I will not elaborate on that here; it has been very eloquently addressed by many preceding speakers.

Another point — which, as we have heard from those around this table, is very sensitive — is that, as Mr. Guéhenno said, it is time to review the segmented approach. We could also put it the way that the Secretary-General and Ms. Mayanja did: we must decide whether or not to create new bodies or new mechanisms. I do not want to belabour this point. But I fully agree that it is now time to review the segmented approach. What we need is, to quote Mr. Guéhenno once again, a mutually reinforcing, more coordinated and integrated approach.

Thanks to the commitment of the Secretary-General and the Secretariat, including, inter alia, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UNIFEM, much progress has undoubtedly been made, as has been pointed out. But, as has also been said, much remains to be done. I think, however, that we have to go deeper into this point — the relation between progress achieved and what remains to do.

I am not so sure that I would agree with what Ms. Sandler said, namely, that the presidential statement that is to follow is a message of hope. It is, of course, useful, but I wonder — looking at it and at what we do from the point of view of those who are the victims on the ground, of those who suffer — if, after six or seven years, what we produce, namely, presidential statements, meetings, plans of action and so on — could be perceived as a message of frustration, as a message of despair, rather than as a message of hope, because what we manage to do is to do only presidential statements.

What I think and hear — and I think Belgian Special Envoy Chevalier hinted at this — is that we know very well what have to do. In a certain way, we do not need more information. Of course, I fully agree that having more information is very useful. But if we really wanted to, we could act today on the information that we have. We do not need more information. We need to know how we can have an impact on the ground, because the benchmark of our credibility, the benchmark of our success comes, as Ms. Torry has told us, from the NGO point of view, that is to say, from the ground. In the last six years has the suffering diminished? Has the number of victims diminished? I am not so sure, listening to what has been said — and I thank the French delegation for what we heard just now. The number of victims in Kivu alone in just the past few months is 27,000, if I remember well. Clearly, I think, we have had a setback.

So, I think the prism through which we have to look at what we must do is the awareness that there has been a setback, notwithstanding everything that we have done, or everybody's efforts, or the evidence of progress. But, at the end of the day, what counts is that there has been a setback, seen from the point of view of the people who suffer on the ground. It is from that point that we will have to start to act.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ghana.

It is a great pleasure for me join the Council at this meeting, which, in my view, has provided fresh and welcome insights into how we can work together to meet what we all agree is one of the foremost challenges facing the world community in this century. The vital role of women in building and maintaining international peace and security has already been forcefully brought home to us. Our shared goal remains securing women's full and meaningful involvement in that enterprise. Therefore, I commend the Security Council on its leadership and its determination to bring to fruition the goals set out in resolution 1325 (2000) of October 2000.

I further acknowledge the important steps that have been taken by the Secretary-General to ensure that not only does the United Nations remain a pacesetter in gender-mainstreaming, but that it also extends vital support to Member States in order for them to fulfil their obligations under resolution 1325 (2000).

Ghana welcomes the commitment shown by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), and the various non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and advocacy groups that are actively promoting the objectives enshrined in the resolution.

Like other delegations, we also attach great importance to the issues of coordination, accountability, monitoring and evaluation, both within

the United Nations system and in the context of national action plans, in accordance with the resolution. Therefore, we consider worthy of emulation the example shown by those Governments that are far advanced in developing national action plans aimed at mainstreaming a gender perspective in the training of military personnel, especially those sent on peacekeeping missions.

Significantly, a gender perspective is also increasingly being integrated into aid packages designed for countries that have recently emerged from conflict. These positive trends, in themselves, demonstrate what could be achieved if Member States were to commit themselves fully to the effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). As has been repeatedly stated, the resolution provides a workable framework for action by all stakeholders.

Much as we are encouraged by the steady progress that has been made since the adoption of the resolution, we believe nevertheless that the challenges and gaps that have been highlighted during this debate deserve serious attention.

The apparent lack of political will on the part of some Governments, coupled with genuine financial and human resource constraints, has contributed to the inadequate institutional response to resolution 1325 (2000) that has been observed by various speakers.

The Secretary-General has put forward several concrete proposals in his latest progress report on resolution 1325 (2000) touching on a number of priority areas. Member States, the United Nations system and civil society actors are all called upon to intensify their efforts towards achieving tangible results that would be reflected in the increased participation of women in decision-making and peace processes, and in the protection of women and girls in conflict situations, inter alia.

Ghana has made considerable progress in developing the necessary legal and institutional frameworks that can facilitate the implementation of the resolution, including the establishment of a Ministry for Women and Children's Affairs. Our objective is to give due prominence and practical meaning to the issues that remain at the heart of our concerns. In the coming years, we shall be seeking closer collaboration between Government and Ghanaian civil society groups and with our respective counterparts abroad. That is in recognition of the benefits of global networking.

For its part, the Security Council should similarly explore the feasibility of a follow-up mechanism that would, in addition to the annual open debates, enable it to monitor closely the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in a more coordinated and systematic fashion. As the organ with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Council has more than a functional interest in ensuring the equal participation and full involvement of women in all aspects of peace and security.

The preponderance of women and girls among the victims of human rights abuses and gender-based violence, both during and after conflicts, poses a direct challenge to the authority of the Security Council, but the situation also imbues the Council's mandate with a profound meaning. Indeed, the Secretary-General eloquently summed it up in his 2004 report, entitled "Women and peace and security" when he observed that,

> "Resolution 1325 (2000) holds out a promise to women across the globe that their rights will be protected and that barriers to their equal participation and full involvement in the maintenance and promotion of sustainable peace will be removed. We must uphold this promise." (S/2004/814, para. 121)

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Bert Koenders, Minister for Development Cooperation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Mr. Koenders (Netherlands): Approximately one third of all women in the Congolese province of Kivu have been raped. In the Sudan, tens of thousands of women in the last years have been molested, mutilated and sexually abused, and not a single person has been held accountable.

Recently, I visited the Democratic Republic of Congo. Even though I knew all the statistics, I was still horrified by what I saw in refugee camps and local hospitals. Unfortunately, this pattern of abuse is found in nearly all of the world's conflict areas. Wherever hostilities erupt, women and girls are most vulnerable. In the former Yugoslavia, women were purposely raped to bear the enemy's children. In Central America,

violence against women is increasing with dramatic figures, and we find similar grave situations around the world. The responsibility to protect is an urgent call here.

Violence against women is more than a violation of human rights. It is also a security issue, and that is why we are here today. Over the last decade, violence against women has become endemic in conflict zones. It has become a weapon of modern warfare that specifically and structurally targets women. That is why it is so important that it be discussed here. Doctors two weeks ago spoke to me about a horrible epidemic. The United Nations Security Council took a big step forward when it unanimously adopted resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security.

Violence against women is only one aspect of resolution 1325 (2000) — although a very important one — but it deserves the immediate and urgent attention of everyone in this room, for it is the most prominent aspect underlining the little progress we have made since the adoption of the resolution in the year 2000. We have been telling ourselves for seven years now that it is more than words on paper. It is a clarion call to arms, a catalyst.

In the Netherlands, we are developing a national action plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), in consultation with all relevant ministries and civil society. I assure this Council that it will not remain merely another piece of paper.

More than anything else, we need leadership. Let us set an agenda for action here today — an agenda that I believe should focus on four issues.

First, we need to include women in our security strategies. This means investing more strongly in security sector reform and in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes in post-conflict countries to ensure that violence against women does not continue after a conflict has ended. I have seen the urgency of the need for this in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

If there is not more security sector reform, the army indeed preys more on the population than it protects the women. We need to train armies and soldiers, making them aware that violence against women is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. The Netherlands will allocate extra funding for security sector reform, DDR and training programmes in fragile States. We have already provided the Department of Peacekeeping Operations with funds for gender expertise in order to integrate a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations.

Second is the matter of empowerment. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, women risk their own lives to encourage others to report sexual abuse to the proper authorities. We need to create safe havens for women who have suffered from violence and help them reintegrate into their societies. As Council members know, they are often isolated. We have to support women who set up their own networks for conflict prevention and for dealing with trauma. And, even more, we need to ensure that women get the place they deserve at the table in formal peace processes. In Liberia, women played an essential role in the peace process, bringing people together across factional lines. I recently created a fund for women's rights and empowerment, and I hope other donors will follow this example, so that we can really pool our efforts.

Thirdly, I would like to call for the speedy conclusion of ongoing consultations on the new gender entity of the United Nations — it is taking a long time — and to stress that this entity will have to make violence against women an urgent issue. We should also support United Nations agency programmes directed at violence against women, especially the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, administered by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

Finally, we have to stop impunity. The grave violation of women's human rights, through massive rape and other sexual violence, requires the immediate attention of organizations such as the International Criminal Court (ICC) and other relevant tribunals. The Security Council can play a role in this area by referring such cases to the ICC. We have to give a clear signal to the perpetrators that the international community is no longer tolerating impunity for these heinous crimes.

In conclusion, I would like to underline the crucial role of the Security Council in addressing violence against women in conflict situations. In this respect, I would like to express my strong support for the Secretary-General's recommendation to establish a dedicated monitoring mechanism to increase the effectiveness of the Council's contribution to

preventing and redressing violence against women in armed conflict.

Last but not least, uncomfortable issues like rape and other forms of sexual violence against women should be openly discussed with and by Governments, members of parliament, militia leaders and opinion makers — by us. The Security Council has to raise its voice on this issue. The "big silence" has to stop. I hope that this debate in the Security Council will give a clear message to the international community.

Let us join forces and implement resolution 1325 (2000). Let us end the abuse of women everywhere by stopping this "big silence" today.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Portugal.

Mr. Salgueiro (Portugal): To save time, I will not read the complete text of my intervention, which has been distributed.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Serbia, as well as Ukraine, Armenia and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) is a landmark along the road towards gender equality and the full recognition of the role women play in society, especially in peacekeeping, peacebuilding and post-conflict situations.

The rights of women and girls, and gender equality, are at the core of major international instruments, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and Beijing + 5, and the 2005 World Summit Outcome. The European Union abides by and seeks to promote the full implementation of these international instruments, not only within the EU membership but also in its policies towards third countries. Commitments to promote the role of women in peacebuilding and enhance the implementation of Security Council 1325 (2000) are also reflected in the 2006 EU joint concept for support to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and the communication on gender in development cooperation.

Nowadays, gender equality concerns are mainstreamed into our development and cooperation policies and in the framework of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), as well as in other EU projects and programmes. We wish to highlight the three-year partnership with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) launched in April 2007 to build capacity and improve accountability for gender equality in 12 countries, with a specific focus on women in peacebuilding and the implementation of Security Council 1325 (2000). Also, the EU Conflict Prevention Network will be exploring ways of assuring the effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) by the international community, Governments and local civil society organizations.

The Council of the European Union has also adopted conclusions on gender equality and gender mainstreaming in crisis management, which are currently being implemented at all levels of European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) missions. The EU Council stressed the importance of fully implementing resolution 1325 (2000) from the early planning stages to the conduct and evaluation of ESDP missions and operations.

Particular emphasis has been placed on the inclusion of measures against sexual and gender-based violence in transitional justice mechanisms, while emphasizing that peacebuilding and reconstruction plans should include comprehensive victim-protection and support mechanisms. In that regard, the European Union also welcomes the draft policy statement and draft strategy on assistance and support to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations staff and related personnel, as well as the upcoming work on the criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission. The European Union is committed to working towards the creation of a clear United Nations framework to respond to situations of sexual exploitation and abuse, and will stay actively engaged in the discussions of the Ad Hoc Working Group.

On the other hand, we must not forget the preventive dimension with regard to gender-based violence in conflict and post-conflict situations. In the European Union context, that includes the development of rules of conduct — such as the generic standards of behaviour, which are binding on ESDP staff and forbid involvement in sexual exploitation, trafficking in women and prostitution. The European Union would

support the elaboration of corresponding rules and practices for United Nations operations and missions.

The EU is deeply concerned about the continued use of sexual violence against women in current conflict situations — such as in the case of the situation recently reported by Mr. John Holmes, Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, and others, on the appalling and unprecedented phenomenon of systematic rape and brutality against women in eastern Congo. Sadly, that demonstrates the importance of furthering the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

We believe that the impact of violence against women has manifest consequences for the success and sustainability of peacebuilding efforts. That is a subject that demands the attention of the Security Council. The European Union would welcome a report by the Secretary-General on the global problem of sexual and gender-based violence in both conflict and post-conflict situations, to highlight the implications and consequences for peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities.

Support must also be directed to strengthening judicial and legal systems, particularly in countries experiencing protracted crises.

The European Union would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Peacebuilding Commission for the achievements of its first year of work. We believe that the Peacebuilding Commission is a most appropriate forum for addressing gender equality and for contributing to the active participation of women in post-conflict reconstruction and institution-building processes, including in decision-making.

We recognize the efforts undertaken to consider gender-equality issues in the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, both in country-specific work and in thematic discussions, as was highlighted in the report on its first session. As recognized in the reports on Burundi and Sierra Leone, the European Union urges the Commission to also consider gender equality as a decisive cross-cutting issue in the integrated peacebuilding strategies to be developed in the future.

In addition, it is crucial to include women in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, while taking into account the capacity of women to contribute to stability and decision-making in society and the vulnerability and special needs of women and girls. Let us also not forget the importance of promoting men's awareness of their role in turning gender equality into a reality in every dimension of life.

The European Union welcomes the work of the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and its reports on the progress made in the implementation of the 2005-2007 System-wide Action Plan, the proposals for an updated plan for the 2008-2009 period, and the collection of good practice and lessons learned in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2005).

The European Union is aware that much remains to be done, including at the national level, to ensure that gender inequality is addressed. The EU also supports the enhancement of mechanisms to further advance the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Monitoring and reporting systems must be improved in order to ensure enhanced accountability.

Moreover, additional efforts need to be undertaken at the level of the United Nations to increase the number of women in senior positions and in peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions.

Cooperation is essential. We will continue to actively work with United Nations agencies, regional organizations — such as the African Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and NATO — non-governmental organizations and all relevant stakeholders. We also believe that it is of great importance to provide information to the broader public on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

We are ready to work together with the Secretary-General and to take into account the recommendations of his latest report on women, peace and security in our policies and programmes.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Spain.

Mr. Yáñez-Barnuevo (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would first like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this debate, which we believe is very timely. We are pleased that the Security Council is once again comprehensively addressing the effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security.

At the outset, I should like to say that Spain associates itself with the statement just made by the representative of Portugal on behalf of the European Union.

Despite the positive steps that have to be taken towards the effective implementation of the provisions of resolution 1325 (2000), it seems to us that the international community is moving ahead too slowly when it comes to ensuring the participation of women at all levels of peace processes and with regard to ensuring effective protection for women and girls in conflict situations. That is clear from the briefings made this morning by various officials of the Secretariat.

I should like to underscore that we are especially concerned about ongoing grave violations of international law — including international humanitarian law and human rights law — perpetrated against women and girls, including sexual exploitation and the abuse to which they are subjected in situations of armed conflict. That is something that many speakers who have spoken before me have mentioned.

Resolution 1325 (2000) calls on States to make efforts to implement the resolution at the national level. Spain is committed to effective gender equality as a priority of the Government. We have developed a national action plan to implement resolution 1325 (2000) that focuses on the following basic goals.

First, it will strengthen the inclusion of a gender perspective in all phases of our participation in peace missions, from planning to conclusion, including the reconstruction and peacebuilding processes. Secondly, it will ensure that military and civilian police personnel who participate in peace missions receive specific training in matters of equality and in the various aspects of resolution 1325 (2000). Thirdly, it will guarantee women, adolescents and girls in areas of conflict and post-conflict the full enjoyment of their human rights, and encourage women's participation in the negotiation and implementation of peace agreements. Fourthly, it will promote as a cross-cutting issue the principle of equal treatment of women and men in the planning and execution of activities in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants and their families. Fifthly, it will encourage awareness and the dissemination of resolution 1325 (2000), as well as the work of Spanish civil society in regard to it.

In order to reach those goals, we have considered actions not only at the national level, but also at the heart of the regional structures to which Spain belongs, such as the European Union, NATO and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and especially and most importantly within the framework of our participation in the United Nations. In that regard, we are striving to contribute to the promotion of gender equality policies in general, and in particular in relation to women's participation in peace processes, from conflict prevention to peacebuilding.

At the national level, Spain is decisively progressing towards the full integration of women into its armed forces at the same level of opportunity and well-being at work as men. In a very few years, we have achieved second place in the European Union with respect to the proportion of women in the armed forces, through a decisive policy to make the military attractive to women by promoting, among other measures, the conciliation of work and family.

Spain understands peacebuilding as a broad process in which development assistance is fundamental. In that regard, Spanish official development aid directed towards gender issues has doubled from 2004 to 2007. In particular, we have continued to work closely with the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, providing Spanish cooperation funds for peacebuilding, especially in Africa and Latin America. Sector strategies for Spanish cooperation relating to gender in the areas of development and peacebuilding have also been approved, in which the promotion of resolution 1325 (2000) is an immediate key priority. At this very moment, a plan on women and peacebuilding is being drafted for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), which will be directed towards all actors of Spanish cooperation.

I do not wish to end my statement without properly highlighting the important role that the Peacebuilding Commission is being called upon to play in issues of women, peace and security. We are convinced of the need to integrate a gender perspective into its work. That will surely result in better and more fruitful developments in favour of peace throughout the world. Spain is willing to work closely with the Commission on that important issue and to continue supporting the Peacebuilding Fund.

Mr. Lidén (Sweden): Let me start by associating myself with the statement just made by the Ambassador of Portugal on behalf of the European Union (EU).

The adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) seven years ago underlined the importance of ensuring that the goal of gender justice and gender equality permeates the work of the international community in conflict prevention, conflict resolution, reconstruction and peacebuilding processes. As we have so often seen, the nature of modern armed conflict is such that the civilian population and women are particularly affected. Women must be involved in resolving the armed conflicts affecting them, their families and their communities. Women should take full part in the creation and implementation of peace agreements, and they must be able to participate equally in political decision-making process. Efforts such as security system reform should have a gender and human security perspective.

We urge the Secretary-General, the Security Council and all Member States to contribute to the effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), including by increasing the number of women in senior positions at field level.

Last year, Sweden launched a national plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The approach of the Swedish Government to resolution 1325 (2000) is based on a holistic view of security, development and human rights. Agencies, ministries and Government offices are working together to achieve the goals of the resolution. As an active Member of the United Nations and the European Union, Sweden has an obvious interest in and responsibility for the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in United Nations peace support activities, as well as in the European Union's external relations. The EU's contribution to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) enhances its effectiveness and credibility as an actor in crisis management. The EU handbook on gender for the planning and conduct of operations, as well as the fairly new feature of gender advisers in EU missions, are some concrete measures.

The United Nations system has made considerable efforts to implement resolution 1325 (2000). However, more needs to be done both in the field and at Headquarters. Concerted and concrete efforts by the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Support Office are called for. We are also looking forward to new initiatives coming from the Security Council, and we should like to have seen a request for a special report on the situation of women and girls as victims in armed conflicts.

We believe that the United Nations system needs to redouble its efforts to counter violence against women in conflict. It is also important to underline that such violence rarely stops once the conflict is over. In some cases, violence against women even increases. The efforts to stop this kind of violence must not end with a peace agreement or even after democratic elections have taken place. The transition period should be an opportunity to strengthen the rule of law — and the law must protect women. For that to happen, women must also be guaranteed full access to justice. That very matter will be discussed today in a meeting organized by the Partners for Gender Justice Initiative, co-chaired by South Africa and Sweden.

In last year's open debate on resolution 1325 (2000), Sweden underlined that we all have a responsibility to provide ideas, initiatives and good practices, and not to simply ask for reports and proposals from others. The focus of the Partners for Gender Justice initiative that I mentioned has been on empowering women to participate in, and gain improved access to, the justice sector. That work is an important element for implementing resolution 1325 (2000). Sweden calls on other Member States and the United Nations to carry it forward by initiating concrete programmes in the area of women and justice.

More attention should also be paid to the pressing issue of effectively incorporating women into demobilization, disarmament and reintegration measures. Experiences from Sierra Leone and Liberia show that women who are former combatants or have been associated with fighting forces face more difficulties in being accepted back into their communities than men.

I will finish my statement by once again underlining that we all have a common responsibility to contribute to the experience-sharing that is needed for the further implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Sweden attaches great importance to taking into account gender perspectives in all areas of work, nationally and internationally. It is my hope that this debate will be a catalyst for further efforts in the struggle to recognize and act on the legitimate

demands of women for full equality, justice and opportunity, not only in armed conflicts, but in life itself.

The President: I now call on the representative of Guatemala.

Mr. Skinner-Klée (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are grateful to the Ghanian presidency for convening this annual meeting on women and peace and security, which helps us further the work of achieving the full and complete implementation of Council resolution 1325 (2000).

This debate also allows us to consider the full application of that important resolution. We are convinced of the essential role played by women in the prevention and settlement of conflicts, in the promotion of justice and of reconciliation, support for disarmament and demobilization and the reconstruction of national institutions — all essential pillars for peacebuilding.

We are also aware that women and girls suffer from effects more devastating than those already entailed by the conflict itself, especially owing to increasingly widespread gender-based violence, rapes, sexual exploitation, sexual slavery, undesired pregnancy as a result of these heinous acts and the stigma that those women and girls suffer in their own communities. Those are all acts that affect their psychological and emotional stability and even put their lives at risk.

We shall not rest until we see that in the field, the specific needs of women and girls are receiving the special priority attention they deserve, with the active cooperation of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes that work on this issue and Member States, with the support of non-governmental organizations and civil society groups. In that context, we want to recognize the important work being done by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. We urge them to continue their contribution in view of the major challenges that lie ahead.

In that connection, we support the creation of effective institutions that ensure the promotion of the rights of women and girls and the capacity-building necessary to their inclusion, on an equal basis, in peace process negotiations and at the decision-making level in peacebuilding. The mainstreaming of the gender perspective in national and international plans is vital to achieving integral, balanced peacekeeping operations.

We thank the Secretary-General for his annual report (S/2007/567), which serves as a basis for this dialogue, because it continues to update, monitor and revise the previous Action Plan, for 2005-2007, and for his presentation of the new, updated Action Plan, for 2008-2009, on the advances and obstacles in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Our delegation believes that the changes made in the Action Plan for 2008-2009 are positive. The re-shaping of the concept and the focus on five thematic areas — of which prevention, participation and protection are transversal, interrelated with other thematic resolutions; relief and recovery emphasize the concrete needs of women and children; and the normative thematic area — will make it possible to broaden the scope of efforts to apply resolution 1325 (2000) and will help States to meet their commitments regarding equality between women and men and the empowerment of women in the field of peace and security.

As a country that has emerged from conflict, we are aware of the importance of receiving help in preparing national plans and strategies to coordinate policies, because that is the most important time to promote the application of resolution 1325 (2000).

At the national level, the Ministry of Defence of Guatemala confirmed its commitment to the principle of gender equality through a process that harmoniously integrates women into military life. That has been accomplished with respect for human rights and in the context of the national and international legal order.

Since women were accepted in the military in 1996, there has been a yearly increase in the participation of Guatemalan women in the army, as cadets in the Polytechnic School. Currently, there are 59 women officers in active duty, which represents 4 per cent of the total. There are 604 women specialists, which represents 18 per cent. There are 42 women who are commissioned officers, representing almost 16 per cent. In summary, there are 955 women in active duty, amounting to 7.17 per cent of the total. Those woman have grades ranging from second lieutenant to colonel, in areas such as army administration, military police, war material,

transmissions, navy and air force, and are all graduates of the Polytechnic School.

In peacekeeping operations, we have maintained an average of 11 per cent of female personnel in contingents in the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), including military observers. We will continue to broaden our policy of including female personnel in each contingent. Currently, in the military police unit in our MINUSTAH contingent, a woman commands the operational and investigation unit.

Allow me to refer to gender advisers, who should be included in peacekeeping operations in the field. Currently, 11 out of 18 active missions in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations include that post. That is encouraging, but it is not enough. We believe that every mission should incorporate that post.

Peacekeeping operations, in addition, can help provide information on the violent acts committed against women and girls. The basic thing is to know exactly what is happening on the ground. As Minister Koenders of the Netherlands rightly pointed out, it is essential not to remain silent and not to allow silence to become impunity.

The President: There are still a number of speakers remaining on my list for this meeting. In view of the lateness of the hour, I intend, with the concurrence of the members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

The meeting was suspended at 1.20 p.m.